

Tentative seminar title: “Fuel treatments in theory and practice: science applications in support of the Cohesive Strategy”

Purpose statement:

The Cohesive Strategy (CS) provides a comprehensive assessment of wildland fire across all lands of the United States, including general guidelines to assist land managers when planning wildland fire and hazardous fuels-related activities. One important theme is that an expanded use of wildland fire is necessary to achieve the goals put forth in the CS. In support of this recognition, the CS broadly identified areas where fuel treatments may be an economically viable precursor to the subsequent use of managed fire to achieve land management objectives. In theory, strategically placing treatments across a landscape can expand future low-risk opportunities for managed fire by reducing the risk or exposure of highly valued resources and assets to negative fire effects. In turn, multiple direct and indirect treatment benefits may be achieved through the reintroduction of fire. However, there remains an important knowledge gap between theory and practice that precludes an evaluation of fuel treatments at the programmatic level: whether and how the presence of fuel treatments influences decisions to manage wildland fire. Without such information, many of the assumptions over potential treatment benefits remain untested and can't be generalized. The purpose of this seminar is to explore the link between fuels management and fire management from both an applied and theoretical perspective.

Learning objectives:

We hope to engage land managers and members of the science community in a discussion over fuel treatment effectiveness in theory and practice. This discussion will begin with short presentations from selected scientists and managers working at the intersection of fuel treatments and wildland fire management. Following presentations, we envision a structured panel discussion with the presenters serving as expert panelists. Our goal is to facilitate an environment where managers and scientists can identify progress and barriers towards successful fuel treatment implementation.

Participants:

We are interested in soliciting participation from managers with direct fire and/or fuel management responsibilities, and scientists with upcoming, ongoing, or recently completed projects related to the seminar theme, particularly those supported by the Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) under relevant task statements. Confirmed presenters/panel participants and their tentative presentation titles include:

- 1) Karin Riley – Research Ecologist, Rocky Mountain Research Station, US Forest Service
“Optimizing fuel treatments based on risk reduction and budget constraints”
- 2) Helen Naughton – Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Montana
“Matching data on resource use and costs in fire suppression”
- 3) Kevin Barnett – Research Associate, Department of Economics, University of Montana
“Fuel treatment and previous fire effects on suppression costs”
- 4) Brandon Collins – Research Fire Scientist, Center for Fire Research and Outreach, UC Berkeley

“How do constraints on fuel treatment placement impact landscape-level hazardous fire potential”

bcollins@berkeley.edu

- 5) Tessa Nicolet – Regional Fire Ecologist, Southwestern Region, US Forest Service

“The evolution of fuels treatments in the southwest”

tnicolet@fs.fed.us

- 6) Serra Hoagland – Liaison Officer and Biologist, Rocky Mountain Research Station, US Forest Service

“Fire in Indian Country: a case study of fuel management in the southwest”

sjhoagland@fs.fed.us

- 7) Leda Kobziar – Assistant Professor, Department of Natural Resources and Society, University of Idaho

“Prescribed burning to treat fuels: lessons and realities across regions”

lkobziar@uidaho.edu